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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL STRUCTURE

I. National Security Council

The National Security Council (NSC) shall be the principal forum for consideration of national security policy issues requiring Presidential decision.

The functions and responsibilities of the NSC shall be as set forth in the National Security Act of 1947, as amended.

The NSC shall meet regularly. Those heads of Departments and Agencies who are not regular members shall participate as appropriate, when matters affecting their Departments or Agencies are considered.

The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, in consultation with the regular members of the NSC, shall be responsible for developing, coordinating and implementing national security policy as approved by me. He shall determine and publish the agenda of NSC meetings. He shall ensure that the necessary papers are prepared and -- except in unusual circumstances -- distributed in advance to Council members. He shall staff and administer the National Security Council.

Decision documents shall be prepared by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and disseminated by him after approval by the President.

II. NSC Responsibilities of the Secretary of State

The Secretary of State is my principal foreign policy advisor. As such, he is responsible for the formulation of foreign policy and for the execution of approved policy.

I have assigned to the Secretary of State authority and responsibility, to the extent permitted by law, for the overall direction, coordination, and supervision of the interdepartmental activities incident to foreign policy formulation, and the activities of Executive Departments and Agencies of the United States overseas. Such activities do not include those of United States military forces operating in the field under the command of a United States area milit.

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For Immediate Release

January 12, 1982

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Protection of Classified National Security Council
and Intelligence Information

Unauthorized disclosure of classified information under the jurisdiction of the National Security Council and of classified intelligence reports is a problem of major proportions within the U.S. Government. The Constitution of the United States provides for the protection of individual rights and liberties, including freedom of speech and freedom of the press, but it also requires that government functions be discharged efficiently and effectively, especially where the national security is involved. As President of the United States, I am responsible for honoring both Constitutional requirements, and I intend to do so in a balanced and careful manner. I do not believe, however, that the Constitution entitles government employees, entrusted with confidential information critical to the functioning and effectiveness of the Government, to disclose such information with impunity. Yet this is precisely the situation we have. It must not be allowed to continue.

To this end, I hereby establish and direct implementation of the following policies.

Contacts with the Media

All contacts with any element of the news media in which classified National Security Council matters or classified intelligence information are discussed will require the advance approval of a senior official. An administrative memorandum will be prepared as soon as possible after the contact, recording the subjects discussed and all information provided to the media representatives.

Access

The unauthorized disclosure of classified National Security Council information, documents, and deliberations requires further control to limit access and to ensure an accurate record of those who have had access. The number of officials with access to documents relating to NSC matters will be kept to the minimum essential to the orderly conduct of the government's business.

Investigations